

### REMARKS

Claims 1-30 are pending. Applicants elect with traverse Group I (claims 1-28) for examination on the merits. With regard to the requirement for an election of species, the drawings indicated by the Examiner (i.e., Figs. 3 to 7) do not show different species of the elected invention. Instead they illustrate different views of the invention at different points of its operation: i.e., connecting and disconnecting the ends of two catheters. See page 5 of the present specification “Brief Description of the Drawings” which refers to reduced-scale partial sections with parts removed. Figs. 3 to 7 do not show alternative embodiments of the invention (i.e., species). But to be responsive to the requirement for an election of species, Fig. 3 is elected. Claims 1-30 read on the elected species. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute nonelected subject matter in a further application.

The amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure and, thus, no new matter is added by their entry. The breadth of the claims is not changed because the amendments are directed to correcting informalities that by their nature (e.g., typographical errors) do not limit the scope of the original claims.

Notwithstanding the above election, reconsideration of the restriction requirement is requested because examination of all pending claims would not constitute a serious burden. Although the inventions identified by the Examiner are separately patentable, both the need for compact prosecution and the public interest would be served by examination of all claims in a single application. Thus, claims 29-30 should not be withdrawn from consideration.

Furthermore, under the Commissioner’s Notice of March 26, 1996 (1184 OG 86) implementing the Federal Circuit’s decisions of *In re Ochiai*, 37 USPQ2d 1127 (1995) and *In re Brouwer*, 37 USPQ2d 1663 (1996), Applicants request rejoinder of nonelected method claims upon an indication that an elected product claim is allowable.

Applicants earnestly solicit an early and favorable examination on the merits. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if any further information is required.

Respectfully submitted,

**NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.**

By:                     /Gary R. Tanigawa/                      
Gary R. Tanigawa  
Reg. No. 43,180

901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor  
Arlington, VA 22203-1808  
Telephone: (703) 816-4000  
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100